



Afternoon Alert - Wednesday, February 8, 2018

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK, NTV, and TBS led with reports on the heavy snowfall in the Hokuriku region, saying that about 300 cars are still stranded in Fukui. TV Asahi led with a report that a group of North Korean athletes arrived in PyeongChang, South Korea, today to compete in the Winter Olympics. Fuji TV also reported on the Olympics.

INTERNATIONAL

Vice President Pence sends strong warning to North Korea

NHK reported at 3 p.m. that Vice President Pence delivered a speech to U.S. service members and SDF members at Yokota AB today, during which he sent a strong warning to North Korea by saying that it should not underestimate the capabilities of the U.S. military. The network quoted the Vice President as saying: "We will continue to intensify this maximum pressure campaign on North Korea until it abandons its nuclear and ballistic missile programs once and for all. But until that day arrives, let the world know, we are ready for any eventuality." The network said the Vice President also expressed the U.S. commitment to closely work with Japan to defend against the North Korean threat. He was also quoted as saying: "Those who dare threaten us would do well not to underestimate the capabilities of the armed forces of the United States. We will defeat any attack, and meet any use of conventional or nuclear weapons with a response that is rapid, overwhelming, and effective."

- [Gist of meeting between PM Abe, VP Pence on Feb. 7](#) (Sankei)
- [Japan and Russia seek progress on territorial dispute in Tokyo talks](#) (The Japan Times)

- [Japan, U.S. agree not to let inter-Korea talks sway pressure campaign](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan, ASEAN naval exchanges necessary in response to China's moves](#) (THEMIS)
- [Suga says he will "monitor developments" related to inter-Korea relations as Mangyongbong moors in ROK](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japanese, Russian chief negotiators agree to collaborate to denuclearize North Korea](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: South Korea must not bring territorial issue into Olympic Games](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan sends quake rescue team, equipment to Taiwan](#) (Kyodo News)

ECONOMY

- [Mitsubishi Heavy sees no need to further delay delivery of first regional jet](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Japan's farm, fisheries exports mark record high for 5th yr](#) (Kyodo News)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on Feb. 7, 2018](#) (Nikkei)
- [Tug-of-war in LDP over Article 9 Paragraph 2 of Constitution](#) (Mainichi)
- [Kishida, Ishiba are Abe's pain in the neck](#) (THEMIS)

SECURITY

- [DM Onodera says introduction of long-range cruise missiles for defensive purposes](#) (Nikkei)
- [Editorial: GSDF chopper crash illustrates urgent need for review of maintenance](#) (The Japan News)
- [Cartoon: The silence of the dugong](#) (Asahi)

SOCIETY

Snowboarder Ayumu Hirano pushes himself to the limit

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" reported on Ayumu Hirano, a 19-year-old Japanese snowboarder who is said to be the most likely person to win the gold medal in the halfpipe competition in the PyeongChang Olympics. The program reported on how Hirano overcame a major injury last year and aims to pull off back-to-back 1440 triple cork spins. The program also reported on American snowboarder Shaun White, Hirano's biggest rival.

- [Japanese victims of human trafficking log another record high](#) (Jiji Press)

